



SPECIAL AIRWORTHINESS INFORMATION BULLETIN

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<http://www.faa.gov/aircraft/safety/alerts/>

This is information only. Recommendations aren't mandatory.

Introduction

This Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin (SAIB) alerts you, owners, operators, pilots, and mechanics of **all US-Registered Rotorcraft**, to adhere to the aircraft manufacturer operation and maintenance procedures to prevent fuel contamination. We are issuing this SAIB as a reminder due to a recent review of accidents caused by contaminated fuel.

Reference

Helicopter Safety Advisory Conference (HSAC) Recommended Practice (RP) #2004-02, Jet Fuel Quality Control Procedures, dated 2/16/04 (Go to www.hsac.org and click on "Recommended Procedures").

Background

Water, dirt, biological, or other contaminants in fuel systems are dangerous. You should prevent any contamination of the fuel system. A recent review of rotorcraft accident data from 1998 through 2004 showed that there have been at least 21 rotorcraft accidents due to fuel contamination. This represents 18% of all engine related accidents. Of the rotorcraft accidents attributed to powerplant failure from fuel contamination, most have been traced to the following:

- Poor fuel system quality control – fuel storage equipment and aircraft systems
- Inadequate preflight inspections

- Servicing the aircraft from improperly filtered/maintained fuel tanks or drains
- Lack of proper maintenance– fuel storage equipment and aircraft systems
- Storing aircraft with partially fueled tanks

Recommendation

As a precautionary measure, we are providing guidelines to emphasize the proper operation and maintenance of rotorcraft fuel systems and fuel handling /storage facilities. We recommend that you:

- Verify **before** fuel is stored and delivered to an aircraft that quality control checks have been successfully completed.
- Notify fuel suppliers of any potential fuel system supply contamination, as they may be able to provide assistance and recommended guidance.
- Follow the manufacturers guidelines for proper fuel system preflight checks/inspections of the aircraft fuel system in the rotorcraft flight manual.
- Verify the adequacy of your organizations aircraft and fuel supply quality control system.
- Verify adherence to the aircraft and engine manufacturer's recommendations for fuel system maintenance, including inspections of filters and screens.
- If you find contamination in the aircraft fuel system, **DO NOT** operate your aircraft until the contamination has been eliminated.

- Inspect and thoroughly clean any fuel system that may have been exposed to contamination.

We also highly recommend that you review the referenced RP #2004-02 for more detailed guidelines.

For Further Information, Contact

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